

June 16, 1966

Dear Sylvia,

Neither of us has time to write the other in anything but haste, but I do want to bring you up to date and ask you some references. The book seems to be doing very well. I have no way of really evaluating, because it really all depends on what the distributors do for the moment and what kind of a press ensues. At the moment, it looks quite good on the press, including at least some of the important reviews. There will be more radio, including the Mike Wallace show. I'm on TV in DC on Monday, I've been invited to address some kind of faculty-student meeting at the U of Md. and there is interest abroad - five countries in fact - all of which may add up to nothing. I have just refused the second offer for the book because it is inadequate in both advance and expectations, guaranteeing me a very large loss and not offering half of what I need to just get out of debt. I'm going for broke, either a really worthwhile offer or continue with this book, with all its handicaps. I figure the sale of ~~300,000~~ 3,000-3,500 copies will return the printing costs (and most of this is already in channels) and that thereafter I can make back a small part of what I have in this with the sale of an additional printing. We may regret it, but it is our decision. Both offers were from the same house.

When I learned of the planned LOOK attack on the Epstein book during the ABA convention in Washington I told Gervasi at Viking I'd do what I could to help. I expect advance copies of this LOOK within a few days and have already promised a small publication to answer. Fletcher Knebel is the author. The book is vulnerable, but not in any major way. It is an important book, and I have been doing what I can to help it, directly and indirectly. I cannot imagine any valid, basic attack on it from what Knebel can learn from reading it only, but I can imagine the kinds of attacks otherwise possible.

In between work on getting WHITEWASH out and publicized, I have been working on the material. I have located what I believe are important things on both the autopsy and the pictures, and I've done 6,000 words on the autopsy. I'm now working on the pictures. If you have a chance, can you, if you recall, tell me who testified where about the body reactions or responses to gunshots, by which I mean how the body moves when hit. I have been going over the Zecruider movies and think I ~~ink~~ have learned and observed important new things about which I'll tell you when I get to New York (I hope this can be soon) for it is too detailed to write out here. Nor is it alone about the Z. films. By the way, the archive has not yet located the Hughes film for me, and I'm satisfied the Z has been altered. I was able to learn nothing of real value from the Nix or Muchmore films, which are very short and not very clear. They do, however, show the happy President on Elm St, and from the rear, and while far from clear, I am of the opinion that in this very brief interval before the assassination, and while he was waving to the crowds, his jacket was not bunched up on his back. I also told the Archivist that my good Bolex is available to them for the showing of any 8mm films to any qualified researchers

if a special trip to Washington for me is not required. These two films show nothing of the shooting before the fatal bullet and not much in addition to what is on the other film of that that I could see. They do confirm that the explosion seemed to be forward. There may be intelligence I did not detect about the assassination itself - and I had time to look for nothing else - but if they do I missed it. My offhand and perhaps wrong opinion is that stills from them are more likely of value. I got to see them by getting the permission of UPI. I tried to get the permission broadened to include others but failed. I think it also possible that in doing this I may have increased UPI's interest in the whole story.

Also, if you recall, where are the best descriptions of the Laprunder film, that is, its contents? I'm so pressed for time, with so many things I cannot postpone, that even though I stayed home today to work on this I may be too hasty and miss something. If I do and you recall testimony I miss, I can go back over the work later and pick it up. I have enough. I just want to be as thorough as possible.

This writing, unlike WHITEWASH, will be strong and will directly make the most serious accusations against the government. I am satisfied the proof will be abundant and overwhelming. Nonetheless, it is already and will be even more accusatory. You called page 19 of volume 13 to my attention. I had missed it in WHITEWASH. It cannot be missed at the Archives, by the way, as I discovered, and if I haven't told you about this remind me to tell you the whole story when we meet again. It is much more shocking than even page 19. But in asking you whether you would like me to credit you with calling this to my attention, I want you to be aware of the nature of my writing, for I use the word "lie" and I accuse the government and specific people and agencies of destruction, misrepresentation and manipulation of evidence. I am quite willing to give you this credit, if you want it and if you think it will not hurt you, but in view of its potential as you once mentioned it to me, I think no one but you should decide.

Did I tell you when I first saw the Z films that I thought I saw motions by the President's body that I do not recall being accounted for in any of the testimony I read? I am now certain. And did you not tell me that when you saw this film you thought you saw something like this. I wonder if we saw the same thing.

Before I rush to close to catch the only mail, of the day, the first of this series of writing is in France, and I may have word about it as soon as tomorrow. It is also under consideration in the US. Have you any good news.

Sincerely,

I have an advance copy of a new book on flying saucers, Incident at Exeter, by John C. Fuller (Putnam). Do you want to borrow it? And the Ramparts special issue will be delayed again. I bumped into a young man, ~~Edward Holt~~, ~~working~~ would for them at the Archives yesterday. His work is due early next. Hech will be at the archive through tomorrow. Cook has written me that the two-part Nation article is an edited version of what he did for Ramparts. I haven't seen it yet, although the first was due in the current issue, and I know it is there. Haven't had time to look for a copy. And although Holt has just sent out telegrams saying they'll have galleys earlier and books 7/1, I understand they have more troubles.